



RIDLEY
LASHLEY
LOKUS

TEAM BATMAN



KWC
A

AGES 13+
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DC's breakout hero returns to uncover the truth!

NAOMI

SEASON TWO

Written by

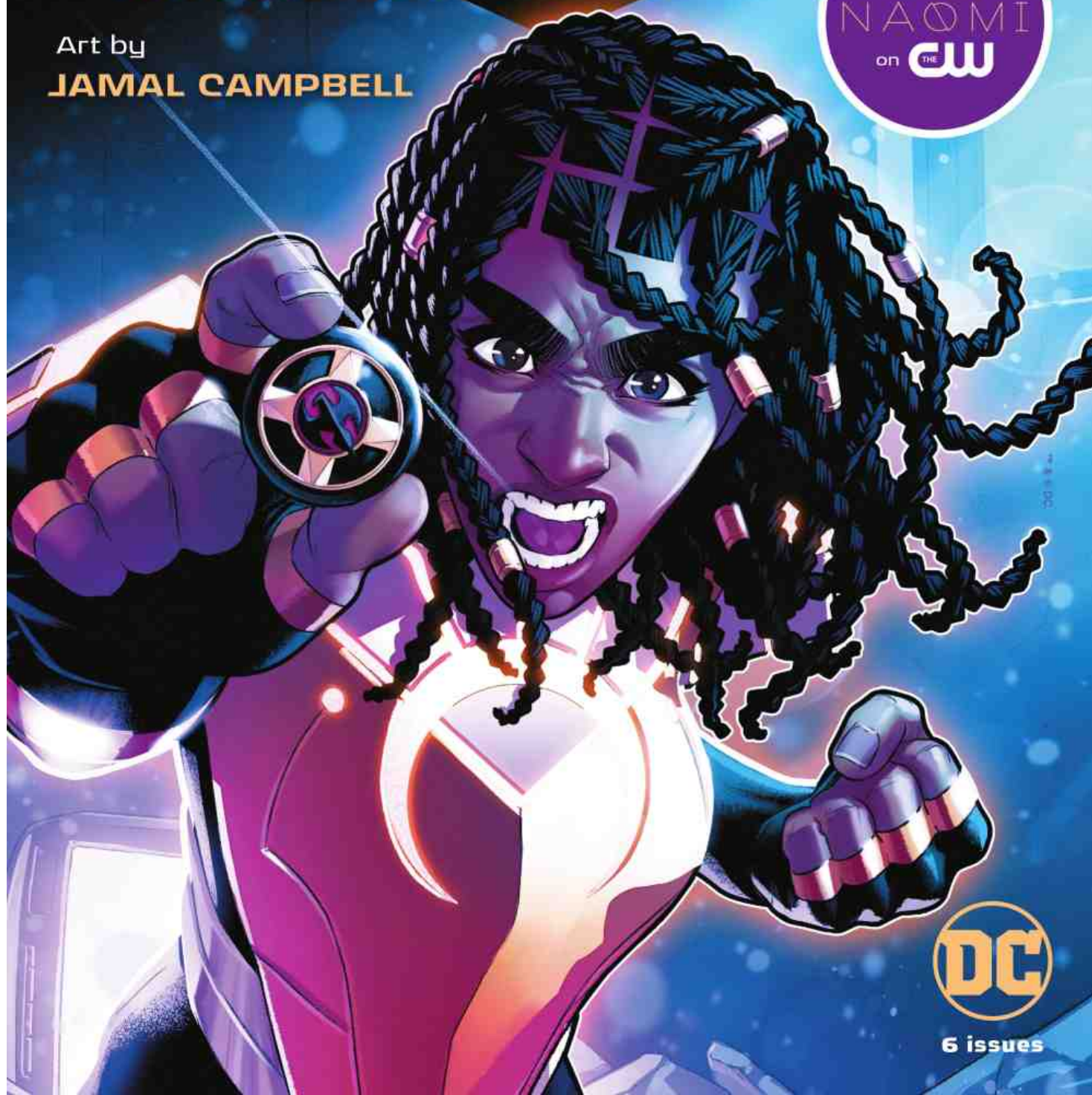
BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS

and **DAVID F. WALKER**

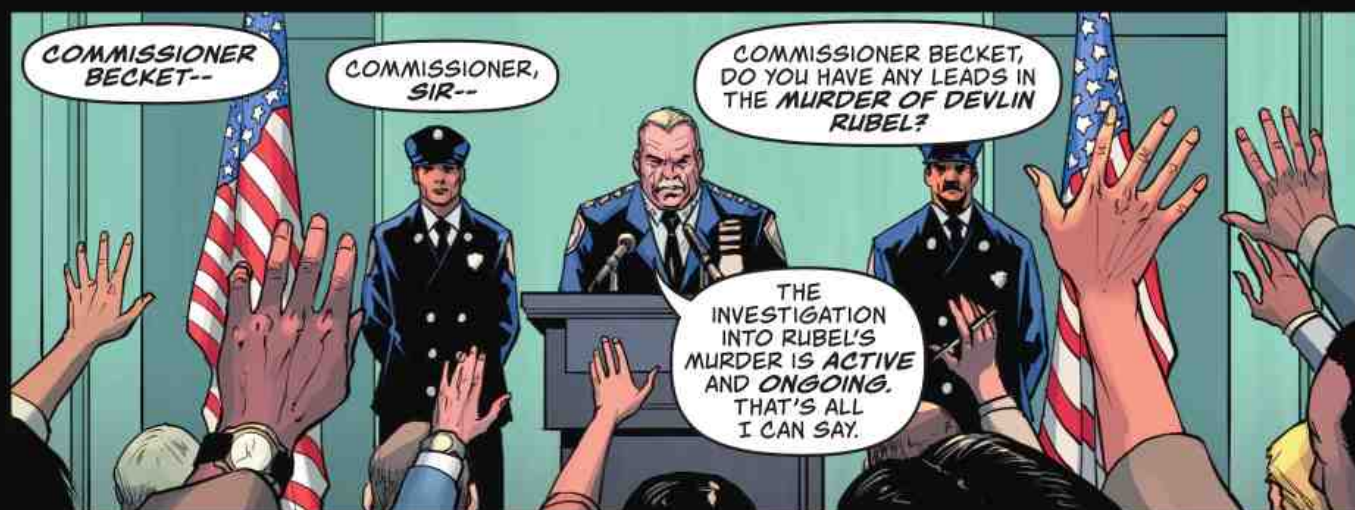
Art by

JAMAL CAMPBELL

Watch
NAOMI
on **THE CW**



6 issues



LOWER MANHATTAN.

IN THAT ORDER, HAD THE BACK OF THE HEAD CRUSHED BY SOME KIND OF BLUNT-FORCE WEAPON.

THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST GRAPHIC MURDERS I'VE EVER SEEN. WHOEVER DID THIS IS PURE EVIL.

BATMAN... YOU GOTTA STOP THEM.





NOT
DOING
IT.

WHAT?

I'M NOT
INVESTIGATING
RUBEL'S
MURDER.

YOU'RE **BATMAN**.
IT IS **LITERALLY**
YOUR JOB TO
INVESTIGATE.
YOU'RE GETTING
PAID BY THE CITY
OF NEW YORK.

A **ONE-
DOLLAR
HONORARIUM**
SO THAT I CAN
LEGALLY BE AN
EMPLOYEE.

**MONEY'S
MONEY.**



YEAH.
MONEY'S MONEY.
WHAT HAPPENED
TO RUBEL IS
%&*\$\$#.

BUT BAD
THINGS ARE
HAPPENING
TO PEOPLE
ALL OVER
NEW YORK.

"GRAY-MARKET
DEALERS ARE
DUMPING GUNS
IN THE CITY,
FUELING A
GANG WAR.

"INNOCENT PEOPLE
ARE CAUGHT UP IN
THE CROSSFIRE.

THAT'S WHAT
I'M DEALING WITH.
JUST BECAUSE
RUBEL HAD MONEY
DOESN'T MEAN
HIS CASE GETS
TO JUMP TO THE
FRONT OF THE
LINE.



RUBEL WAS TORTURED. HIS BODY WAS SEPARATED DIGIT BY DIGIT, LIMB BY LIMB, THEN PUT TO DEATH WITH A BLUNT-FORCE OBJECT AND LEFT ON DISPLAY FOR THE WORLD TO SEE.

THAT'S BAT-CRAZINESS. THAT'S THE INSANITY YOU ALL ATTRACT.

I JUST GOT HERE.

THEN IT SURE LOOKS LIKE YOU BROUGHT THIS %\$#& ALONG FOR THE RIDE. SO YOU GET TO CLEAN IT UP.

BATMAN, LOOK...THESE GUNRUNNERS YOU'RE TRACKING--ME AND CHUBB, OUR UNIT CAN CLOSE THAT OUT.

WHAT HAPPENED TO RUBEL...THAT'S BEYOND US. THAT NEEDS SOMEBODY LIKE YOU.

...YOU HAVE ANY LEADS?

NOT MANY. BUT THE DAY RUBEL WAS KILLED, THE HEAD OF HIS PRIVATE SECURITY CONVENIENTLY WENT OFF-GRID.

I'M GUESSING IF YOU CAN FIND HIM, WE CAN START GETTING SOME ANSWERS.





YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO JUDGE, CHUBB. GETTING BOUNCED OUTTA GOTHAM WASN'T YOUR FAULT.

ALL I'M SAYING: WE DIDN'T EXACTLY GET NEW YORK'S FINEST. AND WHEN IT ALL GOES SOUTH, WE'RE THE ONES LEFT STANDING NAKED IN THE MIDDLE OF TIMES SQUARE.



HEY, YOU CAN **COMPLAIN** ABOUT IT, OR YOU CAN **BE** ABOUT IT. YOU GOT DEALT A BAD HAND, BUT YOU TOOK THE JOB. SO...

...BE THE **LEADER** I KNOW YOU ARE.



I'M NOT A LEADER. I'M A **BEAT COP** WHO GOT PROMOTED TO DETECTIVE 'CAUSE THE **JOKER WAR** DEPLETED THE GOTHAM PD.

AND AS SOON AS THE DEPARTMENT DIDN'T NEED ME, I GOT A ONE-WAY TICKET EAST THAT I HAD TO PAY FOR MYSELF.



CHUBB, IN ALL MY TIME ON THE PD I'VE ONLY HAD ONE PARTNER. **YOU.**

IF YOU HANDED ME A SCREWDRIVER AND A WET NAPKIN AND TOLD ME WE HAD TO FIGHT THE DEVIL, MY ONLY QUESTIONS WOULD BE WHERE AND WHEN.

YOU ARE THE BEST COP I'VE EVER WORKED WITH. **PERIOD.**



YOU **LEAD**, CHUBB, AND I SWEAR THE REST OF US WILL **FOLLOW.**

"WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO **GREAT THINGS** TOGETHER."



FRANKLY,
MRS.
FOX--

TANYA,
PLEASE.

WITH THE FOX FAMILY
IMPACT FUND YOU'RE ESTABLISHING,
WE CAN CREATE A PUBLIC/PRIVATE
PARTNERSHIP THAT WILL CHANGE
NEW YORK CITY FOR GENERATIONS
TO COME.

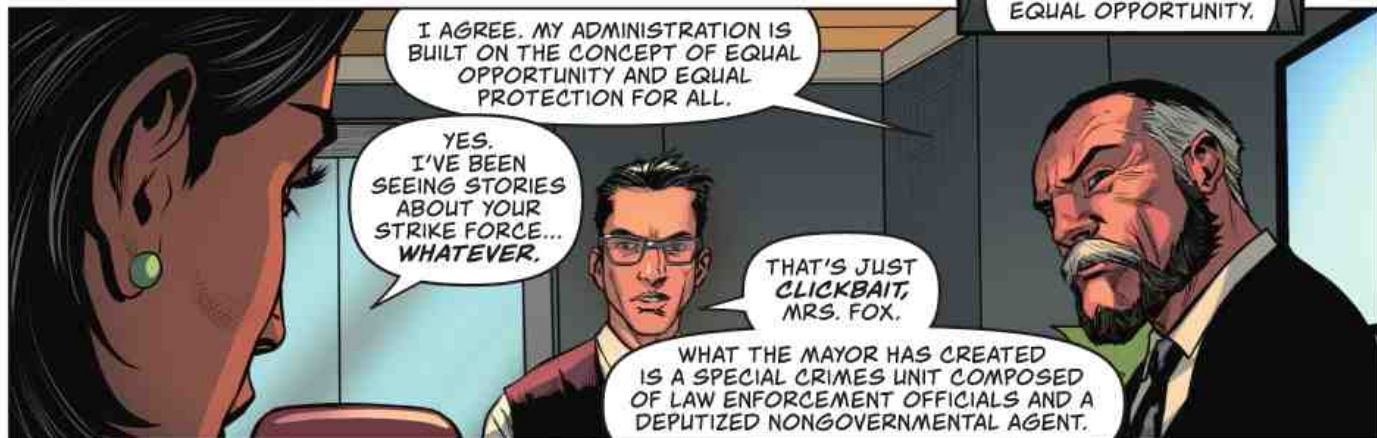
TO BE
CLEAR, MAYOR
VILLANUEVA--

IF YOU'RE
TANYA, I'M
RAFAEL.

THE FUND DOESN'T EXIST
TO BUILD OPERA HOUSES
OR FLOWER GARDENS.

MY FAMILY IS FORTUNATE
ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE
MOST ADVANCED MEDICAL
CARE IN THE CITY AS OUR
DAUGHTER RECOVERS.

I WANT TO
MAKE SURE EVERY
NEW YORKER HAS AN
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY.



I AGREE. MY ADMINISTRATION IS
BUILT ON THE CONCEPT OF EQUAL
OPPORTUNITY AND EQUAL
PROTECTION FOR ALL.

YES.
I'VE BEEN
SEEING STORIES
ABOUT YOUR
STRIKE FORCE...
WHATEVER.

THAT'S JUST
CLICKBAIT,
MRS. FOX.

WHAT THE MAYOR HAS CREATED
IS A SPECIAL CRIMES UNIT COMPOSED
OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS AND A
DEPUTIZED NONGOVERNMENTAL AGENT.



WHEN YOU SAY
NONGOVERNMENTAL
AGENT, YOU MEAN
THE BATMAN.

I BELIEVE
OURS IS FINE
WITH JUST
"BATMAN."

MRS. FOX...TANYA,
I UNDERSTAND YOU AND
YOUR FAMILY HAVE MIXED
FEELINGS REGARDING "MASKS."



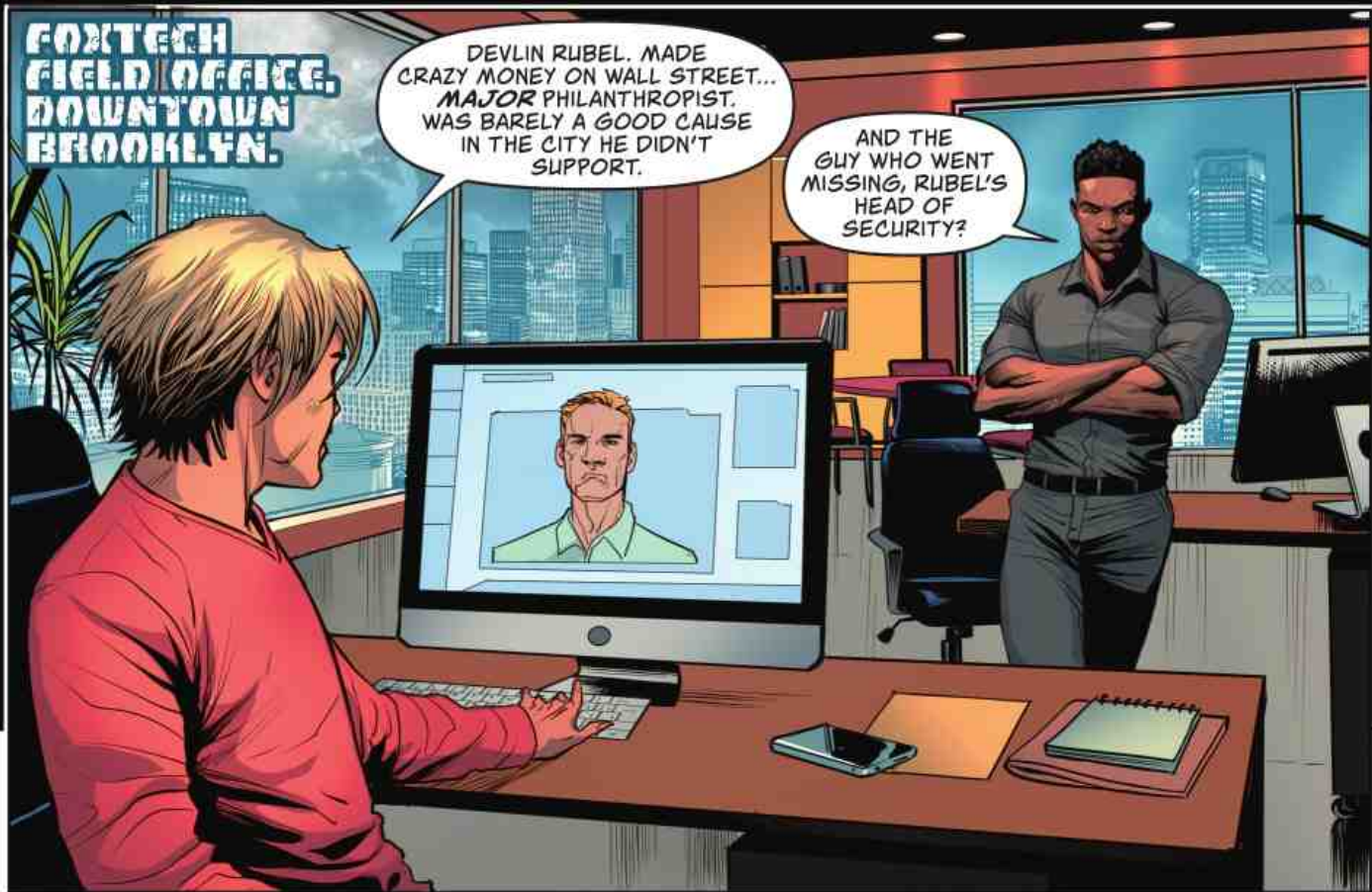
MY
HUSBAND,
LUCIUS, HAD...
ISSUES WITH
THEM. BUT
THOSE ISSUES
SEEM TO
HAVE BEEN
RESOLVED.

AND
YOU?



I'VE SEEN THIS BATMAN UP
CLOSE. HE SEEMS TO BE
VERY...UN-BATMAN-LIKE.

I CAN'T SAY IF
THIS SPECIAL CRIMES
UNIT OF YOURS WILL
DO GOOD, BUT I
BELIEVE THEY CAN
DO RIGHT.





THIS IS DRONE FOOTAGE OF THE WAREHOUSE WE'RE TARGETING. OUR INFORMANT PLACES SIX SUSPECTS AT THE LOCATION.

THEY'RE RUNNING **MILITARY-GRADE** FIREARMS. OUR INFORMANT SAYS THE SUSPECTS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED HEAVILY ARMED AND VERY DANGEROUS.

OUR "INFORMANT"? YOU MEAN **BATMAN**.

CAN THAT GUY EVEN BE TRUSTED? HE SAYS THERE'RE SIX SUSPECTS.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE BREACH, AND THERE'S AN ARMY INSIDE?

I DON'T KNOW IF WE CAN TRUST BATMAN. THAT'S WHY I'M FIRST THROUGH THE DOOR.

CHUBB, HOLD ON--

WHAT DID YOU TELL ME--TO BE A LEADER.

THEY CAN CALL US STRIKE FORCE BAT OR WHATEVER NONSENSE THEY WANT. FAR AS I CARE, WE'RE COPS. WE DO THE JOB WE'RE GIVEN.

SO IF WE'RE GOING, I'M GOING FIRST. I'LL FIND OUT THE HARD WAY IF WE CAN TRUST THIS BATMAN OR NOT.

CLEAR?

GOT IT.

UNDERSTOOD.

CLEAR.

YES, MA'AM.

OKAY. LET'S GO DO WORK.

LOOK AT DAT. **STRIKE FORCE BAT.**

MORE LIKE **STRIKE FORCE REJECT.**

"DAD WOULD BE SO PROUD OF YOU."



LONG ISLAND CITY,
QUEENS.









OKAY,
OKAY...
I GIVE!

YOU
MURDERED
RUBEL!

I DIDN'T
TOUCH
HIM!

YOU
RAN!



YEAH,
I RAN. THEY WERE
COMING FOR RUBEL,
AND HELL IF I WAS
GOING TO GET
CAUGHT UP IN HIS
MESS.

WHAT
MESS?
WHO'S
THEY?



I DON'T
KNOW WHO
THEY ARE.
ALL I
KNOW...

RUBEL WAS INTO
SOME SICK *\$#%.
THE KIND--SOONER
OR LATER--IT COMES
BACK AROUND ON YOU.
I SIGNED AN NDA WITH
RUBEL. I COULDN'T GO
PUBLIC WITH WHAT
I KNEW.

ALL
I COULD
DO WAS
RUN.



I DON'T
BELIEVE
YOU.

I KNOW YOU DON'T.
RUBEL'S RICH AND
SMELLS CLEAN, AND I'M
JUST A BROTHER WHO
GOT BUSTED OUT
OF UNIFORM.

SEE WHY
I RAN?



YOU
KEEP YOUR
HEAD ABOVE
GROUND.
IF YOU'RE
LYING...

YEAH,
I GET
IT.



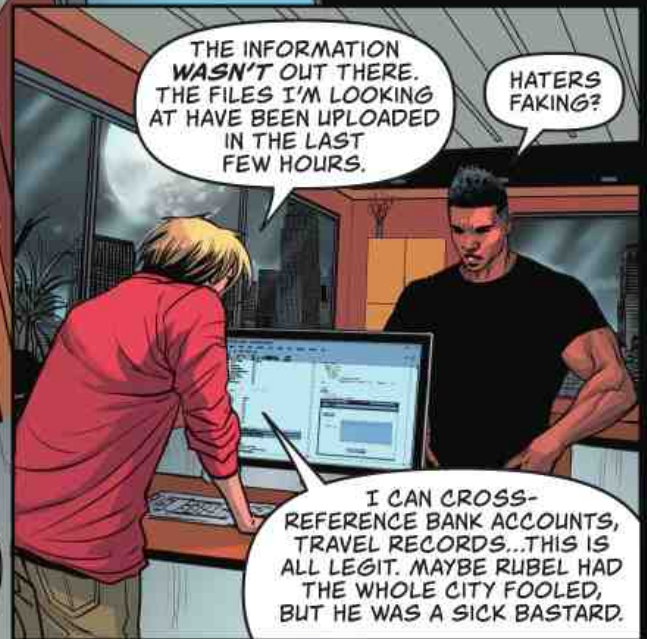


I MEAN, THE THINGS I'M SEEING ONLINE ABOUT RUBEL...THINK OF SOME TWISTED NONSENSE, AND HE WAS INTO IT.

TWISTED LIKE...?

START WITH TRAFFICKING MINORS FOR SEX, AND WORK YOUR WAY DOWN FROM THERE.

PEOPLE THOUGHT RUBEL WAS THE PRIDE OF THE CITY. THIS INFORMATION WAS OUT THERE, AND **NOBODY** DID ANYTHING?



THE INFORMATION **WASN'T** OUT THERE. THE FILES I'M LOOKING AT HAVE BEEN UPLOADED IN THE LAST FEW HOURS.

HATERS FAKING?

I CAN CROSS-REFERENCE BANK ACCOUNTS, TRAVEL RECORDS...THIS IS ALL LEGIT. MAYBE RUBEL HAD THE WHOLE CITY FOOLED, BUT HE WAS A SICK BASTARD.



BURROWS, THE GUY I CHASED DOWN, HE THOUGHT SOMEBODY WAS COMING FOR RUBEL.

SOMEBODY, LIKE...?

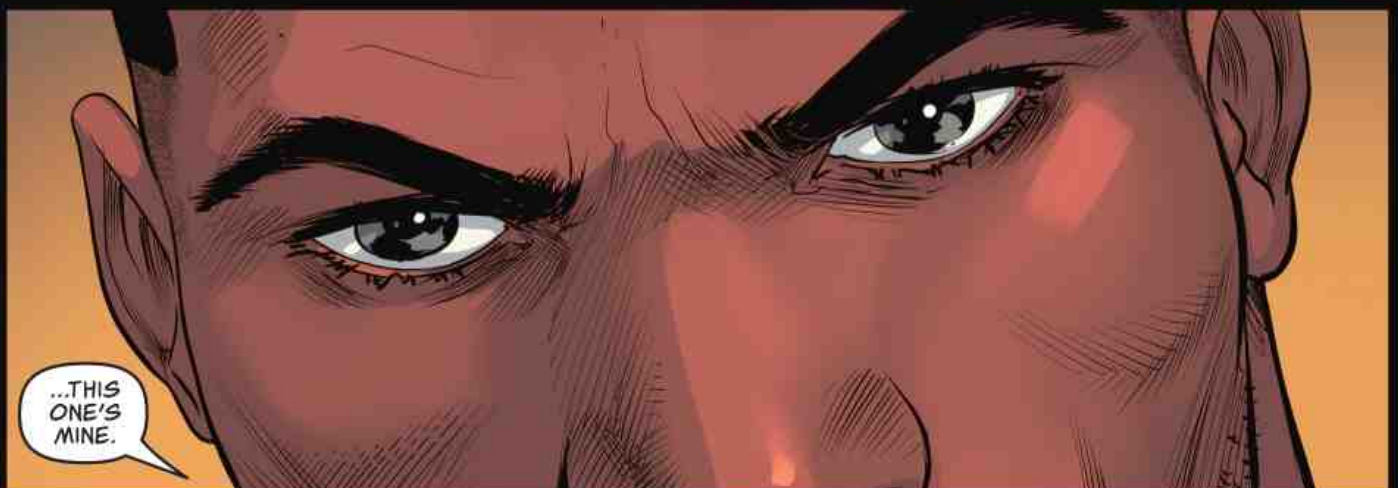
HE DIDN'T KNOW. BUT "SOMEBODY'S" UPLOADING THOSE FILES. CAN YOU TRACK THE SOURCE?



I CAN, BUT...

...IF WHAT HAPPENED TO RUBEL WAS AN ORGANIZED HIT, MAYBE YOU SHOULD CALL IN SOME BACKUP. YOU'VE GOT YOUR OWN STRIKE FORCE.

CHUBB AND HER TEAM ARE DOING WORK. AND IF RUBEL WAS JUST ANOTHER RICH MONSTER GAMING THINGS... WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HIM...



...THIS ONE'S MINE.



DETECTIVE...
IT'S BATMAN.
YOU THERE?

I'M
HERE.

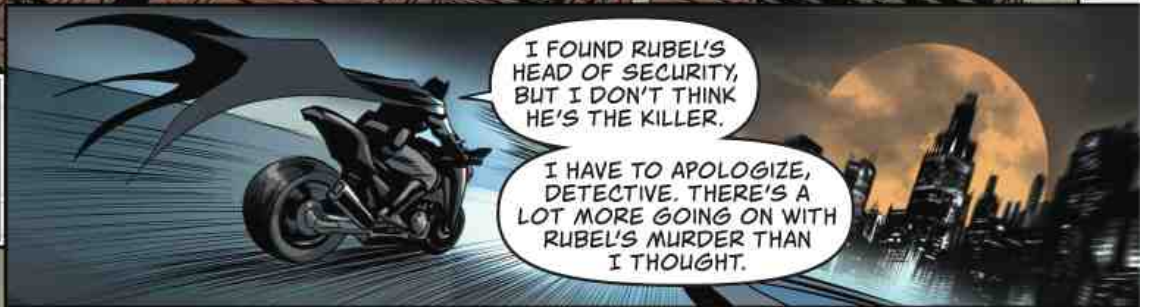
ALL
GOOD?

WELL...



JUST LIKE
YOU SAID. SIX
PERPS, AND
THE JOINT'S
SICK WITH HOT
GUNS.

HOW'S
THINGS ON
YOUR END?



I FOUND RUBEL'S
HEAD OF SECURITY,
BUT I DON'T THINK
HE'S THE KILLER.

I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE,
DETECTIVE. THERE'S A
LOT MORE GOING ON WITH
RUBEL'S MURDER THAN
I THOUGHT.



I SHOULDN'T
HAVE PASSED
JUDGMENT
WHEN YOU
BROUGHT ME
THE CASE.



WAIT...
YOU'RE
APOLOGIZING.
I MEAN... "I'M,
SORRY" ISN'T
SOMETHING
I EXPECT TO
HEAR FROM
BATMAN.

YEAH, WELL...
JUST REMEMBER,
I'M BATMAN, NOT
THE BATMAN.

I'LL TALK TO
YOU WHEN I HAVE
SOMETHING.



CHUBB...
WAS THAT
BATMAN?

EVERYTHING
GOOD?

THINGS ARE...
THEY'RE...



YEAH.
THINGS
ARE
OKAY.

"AS FAR AS I CARE,
THIS SITUATION IS
A DAMN MESS."



WHICH PART IS A MESS, COMMISSIONER?

THE PART THAT INCLUDES SOME CRAZY BLACK KID IN A BAT COSTUME TRYING TO SOLVE CRIMES WITH HIS KUMBAYA SQUAD.

I UNDERSTAND THEY BUSTED A RING OF GUNRUNNERS.

I GOT A THOUSAND COPS WEARING REGULAR CLOTHES WHO CAN DO THE SAME.



THE WHOLE THING MAYOR VILLANUEVA PUT TOGETHER...IT'S A JOKE. IT'S LITERALLY A JOKE. A BLACK, AN ASIAN, AND A JEW WALK ONTO A POLICE TASK FORCE...

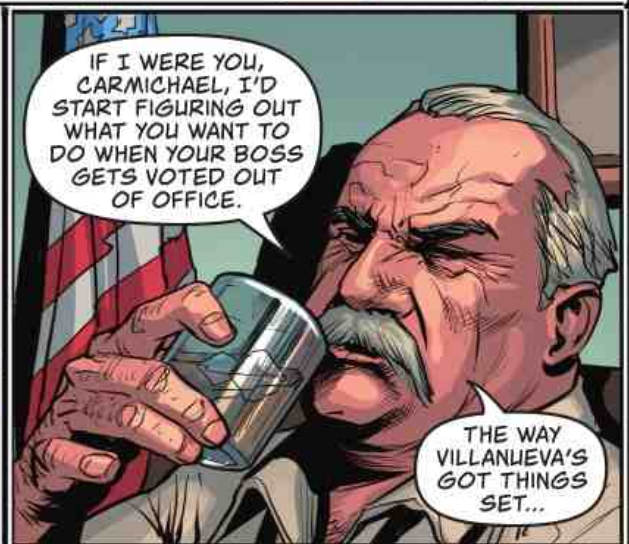
THAT'S VERY NICE, COMMISSIONER. BY THE WAY, WELCOME TO THE 21ST CENTURY.

ALL I KNOW, AT THE END OF THE 20TH CENTURY, CRIME IN THE CITY WAS DOWN. BUT PEOPLE TURNED ON THE POLICE, POLITICIANS STARTED CODDLING THE FRINGE, AND NOW THE PUBLIC WONDERS WHY THEY CAN'T WALK THE STREETS.



I'M NOT SURE WHAT HAPPENED TO RUBEL WAS JUST ANOTHER CRIME. THE THINGS THAT ARE BEING POSTED ABOUT HIM ARE DISTURBING AS HELL.

YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE WHAT YOU READ ONLINE? JUST TROLLS TRYING TO SHAME THE RICH.



IF I WERE YOU, CARMICHAEL, I'D START FIGURING OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO WHEN YOUR BOSS GETS VOTED OUT OF OFFICE.

THE WAY VILLANUEVA'S GOT THINGS SET...





DC Comics Proudly
Presents

I AM BATMAN

EMPIRE STATE OF MIND PART 2

JOHN RIDLEY WRITER
CHRISTIAN DUCE ARTIST
REX LOKUS COLORS
ALW's TROY PETERI LETTERS
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JUAN FERNANDEZ COVER
FRANCESCO MATTINA &
DIKE RUAN VARIANT COVERS

DAVE WIELGOSZ
ASSOCIATE EDITOR
BEN ABERNATHY
EDITOR

BATMAN CREATED
BY BOB KANE WITH
BILL FINGER

IT'S COOL.
I'M HERE TO
HELP YOU.
WHADDAYA SAY
WE MAKE
SOMETHING
BEAUTIFUL?

NEXT: **MANRAY!**

MURDER ON THEMYSCLIRA LEADS TO ALL-OUT WAR!

TRIAL OF THE AMAZONS

Trial of the Amazons #1 • Nubia & the Amazons #6 • Wonder Woman #785

• *Trial of the Amazons: Wonder Girl* #1 • Wonder Woman #786 • *Trial of the Amazons: Wonder Girl* #2 • *Trial of the Amazons* #2



THEMYSCLIRANS
LION

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THE FIRST WONDER WOMAN CROSSOVER IN DECADES!

A game-changing seven-part event starting in March



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BECKY CLOONAN,
VITA AYALA, MICHAEL W. CONRAD,
JOËLLE JONES, STEPHANIE WILLIAMS,
and JORDIE BELLAIRE

Art by
JOËLLE JONES,
ELENA CASAGRANDE, LAURA BRAGA,
SKYLAR PATRIDGE, ALITHA MARTINEZ,
ROSI KÄMPE, and PAULINA GANUCHEAU

Trial of the Amazons #1 variant cover by Jen Bartel

PAUL DANO

ON
THE

BATMAN



WHAT IS BATMAN AND RIDDLER'S RELATIONSHIP IN THE FILM?

Edward [the Riddler] is a guy who can't get a leg up in life. He's somebody who's brilliant but was never given the opportunity to move up in the world. He's frustrated at a city which didn't offer him a helping hand his entire life. I think seeing Batman was one of those transcendent moments for Edward, an aha moment, where he sees a hidden piece of himself. I think without the Batman you would never have the Riddler.

WERE YOU A BIG FAN OF THE COMICS GROWING UP?

I'm such a huge fan now. *Batman: Year One* is, without question, my favorite story and the gateway to other Batman comics I have enjoyed. When I was a kid, I was into comics and collected cards, but at a certain age I had stopped. Now, it's fun to open that door again! Comics are really an incredible art form. Even after reading so many, I'm pretty excited that we still have something new to offer the audience.

WHY DO YOU THINK EDWARD FINDS SOLACE IN RIDDLES?

I think that it goes two ways. Matt wrote that the riddles aren't just solace to Edward, they are also the way he tortured himself throughout his life. The "Why?" and "Why Me?" questions. I think riddles were also a place of solace for him because it's one of the only areas he could find comfort growing up. Puzzles, numbers, riddles, and games allow you to give yourself your own reward.

WHY DO YOU THINK BATMAN STILL RESONATES WITH PEOPLE?

I think the Batman is just so psychologically and emotionally interesting. It's so much about the shadow self, which we all have. It's a real sign of how potent the source material still is. You can have so many different filmmakers and actors give their take on Batman, and each one comes out with something different. With *The Batman* it's one of those rare moments where popular culture and art meet at their fullest potential and I'm excited to share this film.



IN THEATERS NOW!

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The Last Kryptonian-DCP

